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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 000587

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [RU](#) [GG](#) [SW](#)
SUBJECT: TTFGG01: SWEDISH POLITICAL DIRECTOR ON GEORGIA

REF: A. STATE 89769
[1](#)B. STOCKHOLM 586

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires a.i. Robert Silverman for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Sweden fully supports the US positions on Georgia, both measures to support the Georgian government and people (see ref b on their military observers and humanitarian aid to date), and measures to review relations with Russia. On the latter, MFA political director Lyrvall outlined possible steps that Sweden is considering in its current role (until November 2008) as chairman of the Council of Europe. Sweden wants our guidance on next steps for a donors conference for Georgia, see action request paragraph [1](#)6. End Summary.

2.(C) On August 21, Charge and POL Counselor raised reftel talking points with Bjorn Lyrvall, Director General for Political Affairs in the Swedish MFA. Lyrvall, who had just come from a meeting with FM Carl Bildt, stated that Sweden was in full agreement with the U.S. position and shared our concern that Russian troops were not withdrawing from Georgian territory despite repeated promises. He said Sweden would continue to call publicly for an immediate Russian withdrawal and full respect for the territorial integrity of Georgia. He added that the MFA was currently considering plans for long-term economic support of Georgia, including through possible use of a "Phoenix Fund." Lyrvall stated that Bildt and German President Angel Merkel would discuss Germany's proposed plan for a donors meeting for Georgia when she visits on Monday, August 25.

3.(C) Lyrvall expressed concern that neither the new French nor Russian UNSC draft resolutions offer details about the "international mechanism," without which Moscow will say Russian troops have the right to stay where they are. Lyrvall added that he has continued to call Paris to ask for details on implementation. Lacking such, Sweden is urging Paris to convene an European Council extraordinary meeting, perhaps with Saakashvili joining, per Lyrvall. (In a follow-on meeting August 22 with Charge, Swedish State Secretary Nicola Clase had a somewhat different take: Sweden would only want a European Council meeting after careful preparations to ensure unity, and thus to take place after the early September informal EU FM "Gymnich" meeting in Avignon France.)

4.(C) We raised with Lyrvall the possibility of the EU suspending work on its draft Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Russia, noting that requiring Russia to first join the WTO would be in line with international trade liberalization practices. Both Lyrvall and Clase told us that Sweden would support suspending negotiations on this agreement, but others in the EU probably won't. Lyrvall noted "thinking in the EU" that the current leadership in Moscow may simply not care enough about the deal to be swayed. On the other hand, it might prove persuasive to

cease the EU's visa-free travel agreement for Russian elites, Lyrvall stated. Concurrently, Lyrvall noted "positive thinking in the EU" over visa liberalization for Georgians, especially since Russian passport holders (including South Ossetians with Russian passports) already enjoy the benefits of the June 2007 visa facilitation agreement between the EU and Russia.

5.(C) Regarding actions in the Council of Europe, Lyrvall noted that Bildt, in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, is preparing a letter to the Council on his trip to Georgia, and his failure to secure permission to visit Moscow on the same journey. Bildt's recommendations to the Council are still being finalized, including on the possibility of expelling Russia from the Council. Lyrvall noted that a two-thirds majority of ministers would be required for such a move, and that a two-thirds majority of ambassadors would be needed to convene an extraordinary session of the Committee of Ministers. Ambassadors will meet September 3 to discuss whether to convene a ministerial later in the month. Lyrvall opined that a gathering on the margins of the UNGA might be the only feasible. Separately, Lyrvall noted that the Council of Europe will send its Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, to Georgia today, August 22, to assess the human rights and humanitarian conditions in the conflict region. Hammarberg intends to travel to North Ossetia and has received a Russian visa.

16. (C) Action Request: Both Nicola Clase and Deputy FM Frank Belfrage have asked us for US views on next steps for a Georgia donors conference. they would appreciate getting our views before the August 25 Merkel visit. Charge passed to

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Belfrage a contact telephone number for DepSecTreas Kimmitt; we would also appreciate receiving some guidance (to Charge Silverman and POl Counselor Koehler) that we could gist and share with the Swedes.
SILVERMAN